

COLBERT COUNTY

Honorable George E. Carpenter

Colbert County Courthouse
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Angie James
Brannon Lentz
Robert Matthews
Annetta Ethridge
June Thompson

Vista Volunteer: Lea Anne Carter

Council Priorities

1. Transportation

Transportation is a multi jurisdictional issue. State support is required through legislation and revenue.

2. Childcare for low income and single parents.

Fund quality childcare for low income and single parents.

3. Teen sexual activity

Mandate education on health risks, life long responsibilities and legal teen sexual activity.

Issues

Issues are the primary concerns or problems facing children in the county

Early Care Education

Children (0 – 5) are provided opportunities to fully develop emotionally, socially, physically, and cognitively and are ready to succeed.

Funding for quality childcare

Action Steps

- 1) Support current state funded Pre-K programs and other quality pre-school programs with letters of support, talking to state senators and representatives on their importance.
- 2) Promote N.A.E.Y.C. accreditation for pre-schools in the area by offering mentors to help with this process.
- 3) Develop a means to improve communication between childcare and public schools to improve transition and school readiness.

Family support

Action Steps

- 1) Continue support and utilization of Resource Center.
- 2) Continue and expand distribution of packets to new parents at Colbert County Hospitals informing them of available services.
- 3) Continue improvement of developmental screening and referral with area Pediatricians by supporting PEDS screening tool.

Early intervention

Action Steps

- 1) Educated parents as to the developmental stages of children.
- 2) Work with area Pediatricians with identifying children with developmental needs.
- 3) Promote Public Awareness of services available to families of children with special needs.

Economic Security

Children grow up in a financially stable home where the child's basic needs can be met.

Community awareness of services

Action Steps

- 1) Promote Annual Community Service Fair at the local mall.
- 2) Develop a marketing campaign.
- 3) Secure low cost or free transportation within the entire service area.

Low cost or free childcare

Action Steps

- 1) Lobby for funding.
- 2) Collaborate with local Daycare providers.
- 3) Secure low cost or free transportation within the entire service area.

Jobs program

Action Steps

- 1) Encourage youth and parents to participate in state employment training.
- 2) Increase public awareness of existing resources.
- 3) Secure low cost or free transportation within the entire service area.

Education

Children learn the skills necessary to become productive citizens.

Helping families initiative

Action Steps

- 1) Partner with schools to prevent crime, and ensure that schools are safer.
- 2) Help troubled students and families by offering early intervention for at risk students using community resources.
- 3) Work to ensure that students attend school regularly and are successful.

Delinquency prevention/parent involvement skills

Action Steps

- 1) Develop curriculum for mandatory parent education program.
- 2) Work with Juvenile Court System and District Attorney.
- 3) Secure funding for program.

Health

Children's (0 - 19) physical and mental well-being in the county.

Childhood obesity

Action Steps

- 1) Educate parents on health risk related to obesity stressing birth through 19 years.
- 2) Promote increase in physical activity at school and at home.
- 3) Encourage school nurses to identify/counsel high risk children.

Prevention of teenage pregnancy

Action Steps

- 1) Promote abstinence program in schools, require parental involvement.
- 2) Provide education material to teens and parent's regarding risk and dangers of teenage pregnancy.
- 3) Provide appropriate referrals for nutrition, prenatal care and social services.

Smoking

Action Steps

- 1) Assure early education on hazards of smoking in schools and daycares. Require school age parent's involvement.
- 2) Introduce smoking cessation plans for parents and teens.

3) Provide support groups for all ages both children and parents stressing smoking leads to other forms of substance abuse.

Parent Involvement Skills

Parents and guardians participation and effectiveness in fostering an environment for children to become mature, responsible and independent adults.

Coordinate intervention for parent/child, when child is identified "at risk" for developmental or education failure

Action Steps

- 1) Support Helping Families Initiative through the Superintendent's office.
- 2) Increase community awareness and support of Helping Families Initiative.
- 3) Educate parents and student on the benefits of staying in school.

Complete Family Resource Center with education, prevention and skill building programs

Action Steps

- 1) Expand the Shoals Family Success Center into a family counseling center with educational programs and tutoring and independent living classes.
- 2) Collaborate with faith based community for funding, support and transportation.
- 3) Initiate child/parent involvement programs and activities.

Increase parent education and involvement

Action Steps

- 1) Refer parents through the court system to Parent Project.
- 2) Increase parental education through parenting classes.
- 3) Promote the Fatherhood Initiative.

Safety

Children live free of abuse, neglect, crime, and drugs.

Juvenile substance abuse

Action Steps

- 1) Implement science-based substance abuse programs for classrooms and after school programs.
- 2) Bring in speakers to talk with students and parents at our Colbert County Youth Center.
- **3) Implement a train-the-trainer program for local experienced leaders to present seminars as

Delinquency prevention

Action Steps

- 1) Develop curriculum for mandatory parent education program.
- 2) Work with Juvenile Court System and District Attorney.
- 3) Secure funding for program.

Domestic violence/ungovernable behavior

Action Steps

- 1) Provide training for anger management/conflict resolution to parents.
- 2) Utilize Governor's Safe & Drug Free Schools and Communities program resources to teach students anger management, conflict resolution strategies.

Policy Recommendations

- Transportation is a multi jurisdictional issue. State support is required through legislation and revenue.
- Fund quality childcare for low income and single parents.
- Mandate education on health risk, life long responsibilities and legal teen sexual activity.
- Fund and complete our Resource Center to ensure consistent delivery of services.
- First time offender program funding with state protocol.
- Anger Management programs mandated through school Extra-curricular.
- Funding for abstinence program.
- Increase tobacco funding for teen smoking/drug abuse prevention.

Accomplishments

- Parent Project Ongoing.
- Shoals Family Success Center opens. The Board has been selected and actively meeting.
- Education/Courts/Providers have begun designing a juvenile and parent program the Helping Families Initiative to assure education to at risk students.
- New Parent educational support packets delivered at every birth in the county.
- \$500.00 donated from United Way to pay for 501c3 application.
- Received information and have been communicating with CASA on starting one in our county.
- Web site updated and active.
- Collaborated with Lauderdale Co., Economic Security Committee and held a Community Service Fair at or local mall.
- Held Annual DCA Conference at Faith Tabernacle Church for our region.
- Donations for snacks and drinks provided by Wal-mart for Annual Conference.